

University of Texas at San Antonio Football Media Conference

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Coach Jeff Traylor

Press Conference



UTSA 61, Rice 13

Q. Big win at home. What does it mean to get this win under your belt?

JEFF TRAYLOR: The timing of it couldn't have been any better because of the frustration of last week, the way conference play started out. I tried to tell you all week we didn't play bad and we were getting better.

That's just another week of us playing better. We just stacked a bunch of those. I know it's hard for you guys to see it and it's frustrating. We're not where we want to be with our record. In the locker room and on the practice field, the guys are fantastic.

I've said it since day one. I love what this group is about. They're good kids. They show up. They take care of their business and they're fun to coach.

Q. There were a lot of big plays today, offense, defense; you had a good punt on special teams. Did you know your team could have this kind of impact with those big plays?

JEFF TRAYLOR: I knew we were getting better. Our receivers have been healthy two weeks in a row. First time the whole unit is out there. Willie is not out there. He might not make it back. Knee is not trending in a good direction.

Jemel, first time to be out there. He's not 100% but he's out there. DJ, not 100% but he's out there. David and Devin. Got Mehki back. Not 100%, but he's out there. When you're out there with your quarterback it makes a lot of difference.

We knew we had some matchups that were in our favor if we could protect Owen tonight, and we didn't do a great job protecting him but did a good enough job protecting him.

Q. Jeff, after facing some questions and criticism around the offense this week, what did it mean to come out to set a program record for scoring in this game?

JEFF TRAYLOR: We don't listen to that stuff. Next.

Q. Was there anything you went to that was different at that point? What stood out to you overall?

JEFF TRAYLOR: Just getting better.

Q. Jeff, what did you see out of your defensive effort tonight? They had a couple big plays. Shad made a big play. What did you see out of your defense?

JEFF TRAYLOR: Similar what I said to Greg about our offense. Just getting better. Those kids, none of those guys started together as a unit. They been together for a little while now and they're just getting better.

I wish there was some kind of magic pill. I would take it every week. Just got to keep working. Obviously when we come home there is something to that. We're really good in this place. It does something for us.

But the execution was special. I wish I had something better for ya'll. I would like to tell ya'll something, but we're just getting better. We practice hard and compete every day. They do what they're asked to do and keep getting better.

We'll keep getting better. We have a schedule in front of us that's like SEC darn near.

Q. Jeff, what do you think you'll see when you watch film out of Owen? You mentioned protection. He stood in there a few times and delivered some passes?

JEFF TRAYLOR: He's unbelievable. I know there is some fools out there like to say stuff, but, man, there was a third down and nine early in the game. Our running back did not pick up his assignment. It's when the kid got ejected. He literally launched right into Owen's face. He stood right in



there and just took it like a champ.

The dude is as tough a kid as I've ever coached in my life, and everybody in San Antonio is very fortunate they get to watch him play every week.

Q. How is Owen doing from a health perspective at this point? What can you tell us about his overall health at this time?

JEFF TRAYLOR: Tough ass kid. He'll be fine.

Q. And on the defensive side, what stood out there did you feel about the overall play?

JEFF TRAYLOR: You know, I felt bad for Scott. Starting quarterback got knocked out. Second one got knocked out. Third one got knocked out. That's tough.

That's a tough -- that's tough, man. Our kids are physical. They lay it out there every week. They lay it out there. So I felt bad for him. It's a tough way when you're running option football and all your quarterback's getting knocked out like that. It's a tough deal.

Q. You mentioned the timing of this win. I know you didn't want to call this a must-win coming in. How important was to get this one tonight?

JEFF TRAYLOR: Yeah, you know, Jack asked a pretty good question the other day when he said, is there anything ya'll ever say, ever? Will we every listen to anything ya'll ever say? Well that's what great about ya'll. We don't have to say it. You are going to say it.

So must-win, I understand it from ya'll's perspective it's a must-win. You just can't coach that way. You can't live that way.

I mean, that's a recipe for disaster when anything is a must, right? So it helped when you are saying it because my kids hear it and I don't want them to hear it. So we understand it. It's just not the way I coach.

So if Jack is watching you can tell him he might have made a good point.

Q. What did you see out of the run game tonight? I know last week you were disappointed in that. Will Henderson broke free; Robert had a few good.

JEFF TRAYLOR: Yeah, Robert had one called back too. I thought we were really sharp. I did. We were really sharp. People got to play us a little more honest now. We are starting to throw the ball down the field really, really well

again. This is about where we took off last year. Difference is we're playing a much better North Texas team.

All these kids on this defense came in there with the defensive coordinator and know the style well. Eric does a great job offensively always and they been playing really good football, so we have our hands full. And then -- yeah, we just got our hands full for a while.

Q. When you have a game like this where everything clicks in seems like in every phase, what can that do for your group going forward?

JEFF TRAYLOR: You know, I don't know -- six years we been together so I know you get sick of all my stuff. It's never as good as you think and never as bad as you think. That's just what you guys are for, again.

Ya'll are very up and down. My kids are not. My kids are steady. It's -- we're a proven product. We are built to last. We have -- we're 1-2 in close ball games, and you can't do that this profession.

You have to be towards the other side of that thing to be in the championships like we want to be in.

And I will stand on in six seasons, there's only been two times I would say you can say our kids didn't show up. In six seasons. We're going to show up. So...

I can remember like yesterday in 2006 about Elliott Dean being probably the only man in Gilmore Texas that could have fired me, called me in for dinner at the Barn and said he couldn't defend me anymore to the coffee shop boys because we had lost in '05 61-58 and lost in '06 39-36.

And he said, they want to win a championship every year and I can't defend you losing those close games. I said, Mr. Elliott, ya'll have won one state championship in the history of your school. That means in about 115 years you're going to win another, God willing.

Until then we're going to lose all those games probably by one possession. We're going to be fighting until the very end. If you're lucky, we might win one or two or three. Maybe.

He said, you know what? I'm going back down to the coffee shop and I'm going to fight for you more. We're going to be in these things, Greg. You're going to be really frustrated a lot and really happy a lot. It's called coaching football. And because I've got a really long contract we're going to be together a while. We better learn to like each other.



Q. You mentioned the home success. Earlier 21-0 in conference games here under your tenure. What does that mean to you?

JEFF TRAYLOR: What did you say, JJ?

Q. 21-0.

JEFF TRAYLOR: We've never lost a conference game at home? Ya'll want Burke and Lipp and Traylor and McCowen fired? Okay. Moving on.

God bless, Birds Up.

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